

Comparative Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of Boko Haram Insurgency by Daily Trust and Guardian Newspapers. Jan 2017- Dec 2017.

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BEING A PAPER PRESENTED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INSUERGECY AND PHENOMENON OF BOKO HARAM ORGANIGED BY CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC CIVILASATION & INTERFAITH DIALOGUE, BAYERO UNIVERSITY KANO.FROM NOVEMBER 13, 2018 - NOVEMBER 15, 2018 AT MUSA ABDULLAHI AUDITORIUM, NEW CAMPUS, BAYERO UNIVERSITY KANO

ABSTRACT

The study conducted a comparative analysis of newspaper coverage of Boko Haram insurgency by Daily Trust and The Guardian Newspapers. The study seeks to find out the frequency of reports on Boko Haram insurgency by the two Newspapers, framing of the reports, direction of the reports and level of prominence given to the reports of Boko Haram. Content Analysis was the method adopted for the study. Results show that both two newspapers carried reports about the insurgency. On framing Daily Trust has more stories on human interest while the Guardian has more on political religious and ethnicity framing stories. The study concludes that significant coverage was given by to Boko Haram insurgency. The study recommends that media should give more attention to stories that pay attention to conflict rather than ethno- political frames.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Coverage, Insurgency and Nigerian Newspapers

1.Introduction

Generally, Mass Media has been identified with technology oriented - Electronic Media such as Radio, Television, Cinema, Internet etc., along with well-established Print Media. In modern age, Mass Media plays a predominant role in social change. It acts as a catalyst in social transformation. For social transformation, change is very much essential in the outlook, attitude of its people. Mass Media is the prime communicator. Besides providing information, education and entertainment to the people, Mass Media also provides space for social change. In the path of transformation in social, economic and technological sectors, people have to encounter many challenges and opportunities. They have to face them and use them to their advantage. For this, they will have to be properly educated with right information at right time. Mass Media is providing all this to the people.

Thus mass media has become an ombudsman in the process of socialization. The media affect us in many ways: as a major socializing influence, a carrier of culture, a source of information, education and entertainment, an important factor in political communication and participatory democracy, and a communicator of ideological values and norms, attitudes and beliefs.

Similarly, one of the way through which the newspapers inform and educate the public is framing and agenda setting. According to Taylor (2011), framing is important in term of how a message is shared and how it is received.

The boko haram insurgency started In 2002 in Maiduguri the capital of Borno state as an Islamic group that opposes the western education and uses violence, killings and bombings to implement their goals. The group has caused havoc in africa's most populous country through a wave of bombings, assassinations, abduction and fighting to overthrow the government and create an Islamic state. Newspapers as purveyors of information and communication have played a role of informing the members of the public about the crisis, by enlightening people on the dangers of the group and setting agenda about the crisis for Nigerians to be aware about the existing of the boko haram. Reporting insurgency by newspaper is very essential, it is expected that the newspapers should give enough and adequate coverage.

Therefore, the question that agitate this study are these: to what extent are boko haram insurgency issues reported by Nigerian press? and how is boko haram insurgency framed in Nigerian dailies?

2.Statement of Problem

Reporting Boko Haram insurgency by Nigerian newspapers is an expedient responsibility to the press, it is not just to report the issues surrounding the menace of the insurgency in Nigeria but they have to adequately give such issues the attention it deserved. Substantial literature exists on Boko Haram, this study is therefore premise on the newspaper coverage of boko haram insurgency in Nigeria with particular reference to frequency prominence and depth of coverage by the selected newspapers.

3.Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

- i. To find out the frequency of coverage of boko haram insurgency by Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers.
- ii. To identify the dominant issues on book haram reported by Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers.
- iii. To find out the prominence given to boko haram insurgency by the two selected newspapers.
- iv. To find out the depth of coverage by Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers in relations to boko haram insurgency

4.Research Questions

The study has the following research questions to guide the study:

- 1.) What is the frequency of coverage of boko haram by Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers?
- 2.) What is the dominant issues in newspaper reportage of boko haram by the two selected newspapers?

4.) What is the level of prominence given to boko haram insurgency by the two selected newspapers?

5.) What is the depth of the coverage of boko haram insurgency by two newspapers?

5. Literature Review

5.1 An Overview Of Boko Haram

Boko Haram is a branch of the Islamic state of Iraq and the Levant. It has been active in Nigeria since 2009. The name of the group means "non-islamic" education is a sin. The group is active in the north and wants to impose Islamic law in Nigeria. Its main goal is to establish an Islamic caliphate within the country which would allow for the implementation of sharia law. The group known as Boko Haram today as reported by Onuoha (2012) started operating in 1995 in Maiduguri, Borno state under the name Ahlulsunna Wal'jama'ah hijra or shabaab, Muslim Youth Organisation with Mallam Abubakar Lawan as the leader. When Lawan left to continue his education, Mohammed Yusuf took over the leadership of the group. The group actually flourished as a non-violent movement until when Yusuf assumed leadership of the sect in 2002. He established a religious complex which included a mosque and an Islamic school that attracted poor Muslim families from across Nigeria as well as neighboring countries, who enrolled their children at the school which became a recruiting ground for jihadist. Boko Haram promotes a version of Islam which makes it "haram" or "forbidden" for Muslims to take part in any political and social activity associated with western society which include voting in elections, wearing shirts and trousers or receiving a secular education. Boko Haram regards the Nigerian state as being run by non-believers and it has extended its military campaign by targeting neighboring states.

Boko Haram conducted its operations more or less peacefully during the first seven years of its existence, which changed in 2009 when the Nigerian government launched an investigation into the group's activities following reports that its members were arming themselves. Prior to that the government repeatedly ignored warnings about the increasingly militant character of the organization. When the government came into action, several members of the group were arrested in Bauchi sparking deadly clashes with Nigerian security forces which led to the deaths of an estimated 700 people. Boko Haram's trademark was originally the use of gunmen on motorbikes, killing police, politicians and anyone who

criticized it including clerics from other Muslims traditions and Christian preachers. The group then began to carry out more audacious attacks in northern and central Nigeria including bombing places of worship, bars, military barracks and even the police and UN headquarters in the capital, Abuja. Amid growing concern about the escalating violence, the government declared a state of emergency in May 2013 in the three northern states (Borno, Yobe and Adamawa) where the insurgency was strongest. Nigeria's security forces eventually seized the group's headquarters, capturing its fighters and killing its founder Mohammed Yusuf.

After the killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the group carried out its first terrorist attack in Borno in January 2010, a Bauchi prison break freed more than 700 Boko Haram militants, replenishing their force.

In January 2012, Abubakar Shekau, a former deputy to Yusuf, appeared in a video posted on YouTube, according to Reuters, Shekau took control of the group after Yusuf's death in 2009. Authorities had previously believed that Shekau died during the violence in 2009. In May 2013, Nigerian government forces launched an offensive in the Borno region in an attempt to dislodge Boko Haram fighters after a state of emergency which was still in force in May 2014 that applied to the states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa in northeastern Nigeria. The offensive had initial success, but the Boko Haram rebels were able to regain their strength. In July, Boko Haram massacred 42 students in Yobe bringing the school year to an early end in the state. On 5 August 2013, Boko Haram launched dual attacks on Bama and Malam Fatori leaving 35 dead. On 15 April 2014, terrorists abducted about 276 female students from a college in Chibok, Borno state. The abduction was widely attributed to Boko Haram. It was reported that the group had taken the girls to neighboring Cameroon and Chad where they were sold into marriages at a price below a Dollar.

In late January 2015, a coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger began a counter-insurgency campaign against Boko Haram. On 4 February, the Chad army killed over 200 Boko Haram militants. Soon afterwards, Boko Haram launched an attack on the Cameroonian town of Fotokol, killing 81 civilians, 13 Chadian soldiers and 6 Cameroonian soldiers. On 17 February 2015, the Nigerian military retook Monguno in a coordinated air and ground assault. On 7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic state of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) via an audio message posted on the organization's Twitter account. Nigerian spokesperson Sami Usman Kukasheka

said the pledge was a sign of weakness and that Shekau was like a “drawing man”. That same day, five suicide bomb blasts left 54 dead and 143 wounded. On 24 March 2015, residents of Damasak, Nigeria said that Boko Haram had taken more than 400 women and children from the town as they fled from coalition forces. On 27 March the Nigerian captured Gwaza, which was believed to be the location of Boko Haram headquarters. On Election Day, 28 March 2015 extremists killed 45 people, including a legislator, to discourage hundreds from voting. In the same March 2015, Boko Haram lost control of the Northern Nigerian towns of Bama and Gwoza (believed to be their headquarters) to the Nigerian army. The Nigerian authorities said that they had taken back 11 of the 14 districts previously controlled by Boko Haram. In April, Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa forest were overrun by the Nigerian military who freed nearly 300 females. Boko Haram forces were believed to have retreated to the Mandara Mountains along the Nigeria-Cameroon border. Currently the Federal government claimed that they have technically dislodged the group.

5.2 Mass Media and Boko Haram

The Media whether traditional or modern have over the years been seen as agent of change certainly not always positive or always negative but alternate from one to the other. Human beings on the other hand crave for change, preferable a continuous positive change. But is quite impossible because the human condition by nature make this unattainable.

In essence, there is break down of order, not only within one's self but outside stretching toward one's immediate environment and beyond when this happen there is a breakdown of the process of smooth of information from one source to other. This breakdown of information flow usually arises because one of the parties see itself a deliberately disadvantage or imagines itself disadvantaged irrespective of the true state of affairs (Anyanwa, 2004:110).

In the case of current security challenges orchestrated by the Boko Haram sect, the mass media can play an effective role in resolving crises through adequate coverage. The surveillance function of the media must be effectively played to warn people on an impending danger. Thus, through effective reportage those perpetuating the crisis can have their perception changed and the peace loving Nigerians can equally have their security consciousness. Over the years, journalism such as newspaper and other form of media practice has succeeded in making itself indispensable to modern society. Focusing on these roles, Momoh (1987:53) believed that a duty is imposed on the press to ensure that the

political objective of Nigeria are achieved in accordance with the motto which is “unity and faith, peace and progress” stressing this point further, Machebo (1987:07) said that ‘we tend to be too pretensions in our conception of our role in the society’. He further assert that press can never properly claim to be discharging any significant role if it fails to consistently describe, if not denounce the countless ways in which the pursuit of wealth corrupts the policy and compromise the future.

However, it is pertinent to say that one of the basic ethnics of media and communication practice is to promote peace at all times. That however is not to say that peace is the absence of conflict, but fact that press has a responsibility to society.

Moreover, certain obligation to society should be accepted as a sacrosanct and must be fulfilled by the press. These obligations are to be fulfilled mainly through setting high professional standard of truth; accuracy, objectivity and balanced information in the discharge of their duties.

In this regard, it has been argued by the communication scholars that mass media should be self-regulating within the framework of law and established institution. Mac Quail (1987) argued that the society and a public have a right to expect high standard of performance from the media and intervention can be justified to secure the public goods since journalists should be accountable to society.

In reporting insurgencies, terrorism and conflict, “news is often regarded as perishable commodity. Therefore, it must be timely if it is to have value. The is in the sense that if an account of event is not rendered as soon as it happened, such an account may become stale later on. In essence therefore, one of the principle consideration in deciding on the news worthiness or not of an event is whether an account of such event at the given time is timely – Television and Radio excel in their regard.

More so, Ngwu (2000:38) opined that we regard news as a perishable commodity. As such it must be timely in order to have value. This is in the sense that you render an account of event as soon as it happened. In other words, the account must have recent. If the account is not timely, the news becomes stale”.

In Nigeria scholars have contended that the media have not been timely, in their reportage of conflict. Afolabi (2010:63) lend credence to the above assertion when he unveiled in his study that the Nigerian media have not fared well in timely reportage of insurgences.

6.Theoretical Framework

6.1 Framing Theory

Framing is considered a Pivotal Practice in Journalism. Zillman et al (2004:1) believe that media frames give meaning to events and issues and that when used appropriately, they instigate readers' attention and interest. By giving emphasis to certain aspects and down playing others, they can capture and retain the readers' attention to the news.

Studies in media framing 2011; Eti 2012; Shah et al., 2002 Papacharissi and Oliveira, 2008 and Odoemelum, Okeibunor and Adibe, 2012) continue to support the opinion that the media draw the public attention to certain topics and decide what the people think about. These studies argue that the way in which news is presented and the attributes used in the presentation, is a deliberate choice made by journalist. Thus the way media organs and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and the issues they cover and the way audiences interpret what they are provided with, are products of media frame. Therefore, content analysis as a research method, has over time represented on approach adopted by scholars to examine these pattern of media presentation of news.

The type of frames examined in a media content analysis, is often time influenced by the event under investigation. This study is on a crises situation in Nigeria and examines the following frames: response frame, political frame, economic frame, religious frame and ethnic frame. Others include: powerlessness frame, attribution of responsibility frame, labelling frame, human interest frame and conspiracy frame. These measures were developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000); Iyengar (1991) and Devreese (2005) for analyzing frame in media coverage issues.

The response frame focuses on the approach adopted by the government in a crisis or security threat situation like the Boko Haram activities. This style of coverage puts government's response on the spotlight of public scrutiny and provides an understanding of how the people would place their trust on the government. The political frame emphasizes escalation of public tension. It points at conflict of interest for power and scarce means among geo-political regions, party and groups. In Ethnic Framing, the crisis situation is Portrayed as

being targeted at a particular tribe. The economic frame relates to the economic consequence of events on an individual, group, institution, region or country (Semetke & Valkenburg, 2000:96). Analysis of the economic consequence of the group activities could be Summed up by Poopola (2012) observation: The summed up by Poopola (2012) observation: the perplexing aspect of the Boko Haram's activities is that it could worsen the nation's economy. The upsetting impact of the Boko Haram crises on the political, religious, ethnic, social and economic life of Nigeria.

7.Methodology

Quantitative Content Analysis was adopted for this study to identify the scope of attention paid to issues of boko haram insurgency by examining what is reported and how it is reported in the Nigerian press. Two newspapers were selected for the study: Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers. These papers are purposely selected as they are considered to be among the leading national daily newspapers in term of circulation. Daily Trust being the widely read newspaper in northern Nigeria while The Guardian was considered as one of the widely read newspaper in the southern Nigeria.

To arrive at the editions, the researchers adopted a specially constructed week. Consequently, the days of the week were assigned numbers as Sunday-1, Monday-2, Tuesday-3, Wednesday-4, Thursday-5, Friday-6, Saturday-7, written on papers that were folded and put in container. The 54 weeks were number 1-58 and put in another container labelled as the week container then both were reshuffled.

For each week that was picked from the container, a day was also picked from the day container. This was continued until 52 editions were arrived at from the two newspapers leading to a total of 104 editions altogether. In all 301 news stories on boko haram insurgency were identified from the two newspapers.

Areas of boko haram selected for analysis includes types of stories as news, features editorials and investigative reports. While text, format depth of coverage, prominence and attention formed the content categories. Attention is measured in terms of inclusion or exclusion of stories involving boko haram, while depth of the coverage was considered as the length of the stories given by the two newspapers.

8.Results

The findings obtained from the study are presented as follows:

Table 1. Frequency of the reports on boko haram insurgency in Nigerian newspapers.

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage %
Daily Trust	186	61%
Guardian	120	39%
Total	306	100%

Table 1 shows that out of the total 306 stories on insurgency by the two newspaper, Daily Trust has 61% while Guardian has 39%. This shows that Daily Trust has more stories on boko haram than Guardian. This could be attributed to the fact that Daily Trust is more close to region where boko haram were operating.

Table 2 Genre of Newspaper reports on boko haram insurgency

Newspaper	Straight News	Features	Editorial	Photo/Cartoons	Total
Daily Trust	148 (80%)	27 (14%)	2 (1%)	9(5%)	186
Guardian	94 (78%)	14 (2%)	1 (1%)	9(8%)	120

Table 2 above is on the genre of newspaper reports on boko haram. The data show that the most predominant genre of reports on boko haram in the selected newspapers is straight news format which was very high with Daily Trust recording 80% while the Guardian recording 79%. It was distantly followed by features which is very low with Daily Trust recording only 15% while the Guardian has only 12%. This indicated that both the two newspapers they did not considered editorial, cartoons and photos as genre for the coverage of boko haram insurgency.

Table 3 Prominence of coverage

Prominence	Daily Trust	The Guardian N
Front Pages	16 (9%)	2(2%)
Inside Pages	162 (87%)	118 (98%)
Back Pages	2 (1%)	-
Editorial Pages	6 (3%)	-
Total	186 (100%)	120

Table 3 shows that Daily Trust in term of placement of stories had 87% of their stories on its inside page while Guardian has 98%. Guardian has only 2% of its stories on boko haram placed in the front pages of newspaper while Daily Trust recorded 9%. This shows that both the two newspaper do not give enough prominence to the issue of boko haram.

Table 4 Depth of Coverage

Depth	Daily Trust	Guardian
Full Pages	18 (10%)	-
Half Pages	135 (73%)	32 (27%)
Quarter Pages	16 (8%)	68 (67%)
Single column	17(9%)	20 (17%)
Total	186	120

Results from the above table shows that Daily Trust had 73% of their stories on boko haram on half pages, while Guardian has 32% on it half pages. Similarly, Guardian recorded the highest 67% of the its stories on quarter pages. Daily Trust recorded 10% of it stories were placed on full pages while non was recorded by the Guardian newspaper. This signifies that both the two newspapers do not give the boko haram insurgency the desired coverage.

Table 5 Framing of the stories

Newspaper	Ethno	Political	Human Interest	Total
Daily Trust	-	55 (30%)	131 (70%)	186
Guardian	52 (43%)	26 (22%)	42 (35%)	120

Table 5 shows that the frame of boko haram insurgency in the selected newspapers is human interest. Daily Trust recorded 70% of its stories on human interest frame while Guardian has most of their stories frame on ethnic with 43%. This shows that Guardian newspaper was biased in their reportage attaching ethno-political issues to most of their stories rather than concentrating on human interest stories.

Table 6 Dominant issues

Issues /Subject matter	Daily Trust	Guardian
Military Expedition	16 (9%)	8 (7%)
Chibok Girls	19 (10%)	29 (24%)
Bomb Blast	5 (3%)	11 (9%)
Suicide Bombers	6 (3%)	10 (8%)
IDP Camps	26 (14%)	24 (20%)
Court issues	14 (8%)	7 (6%)
Empowerment	6 (3%)	-
Boko haram activities:raping,assult,kidnapin g etc	94 (51%)	31 (26%)

From the table 6 above it can be observed that the dominant issues in the newspaper selected is stories about boko haram activities ranging from raping, assaults, kidnaping and confrontation. Daily Trust had 94% while the most dominant issue in Guardian was stories about Chibok girls and internally displaced person's camps.IDP's. Others include stories about empowerment, military expedition, were all dominant issues reported by both Daily Trust and Guardian newspaper.

8.Discussion of Findings

The following discusses the findings of the study in relations to the objectives of the study

8.1 The frequency of the coverage of boko haram insurgency by Daily Trust and Guardian newspapers. As shown earlier in table one both the selected newspapers give enough coverage of the crisis. The daily Trust newspaper recorded the highest coverage with 61% compared with Guardian newspapers which has 39% respectively.

8.2 The genre of newspaper coverage by selected newspapers. The data presented in table 2 show that the common genre of the both newspapers in the coverage of the insurgency is straight news with Daily Trust recording 80% while Guardian has 78%. Distantly followed by feature with 15% by Daily Trust and only 2% by Guardian. This shows that both the two

newspapers do not engage in writing both feature and editorial reports about the insurgency. Boylcoff (2009) argues that the role of journalist is not that of a repeater of occurrences or a parrot but they should be able to promote additional information, interpretation and context to issues being covered, especially complex issues such as boko haram insurgency. For news format to dominate the reportage of the crisis in the selected newspapers suggest that the quality of the reportage is low which in turn could be as a result of weak understanding of the issue.

8.3 Prominence given by boko insurgency by selected newspaper. Results showed that the two newspaper did not give high prominence to the crisis. Table 3 showed that Daily Trust has 9% while Guardian has only 2% of its reports about the crisis on the front page. Most of the stories were located inside the pages of the newspapers. This clearly shows that both the two newspapers do not give the deserved prominence. This does not collaborate with agenda setting theory of the media which suggests that the frequent selection and prominent display on the crisis will provoke public discussion which may invariably influences government re-examination of appropriate response to the issues.

8.5 Depth of coverage of the crisis by the selected newspapers. The result of this study reveals that the depth in the coverage of the crisis was that daily trust had 10 percent, 78 percent, 9 percent and 9 percent as full pages, half pages, quarter pages and single column in that order. While Guardian had 27 percent, 57 percent, and 20 percent as half pages, quarter pages and single column which no any story on the front pages. A further analysis of the reveals that most of the stories by the two newspapers are either place in quarter page or in single column. The implication of this results means that the newspapers do not allocate enough space for the coverage of the crisis.

8.6 Dominant issues covered by two the selected newspapers. Result from table 6 reveals that the most dominant issues reported by the newspaper was mostly the activities of the boko haram which include raping, kidnaping chibok girls, military expedition, suicide bomber and IDP's camps. This shows the both the two newspapers keep the members of the public abreast with latest new stories about the crisis.

9. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, finding reveals that Daily Trust and Guardian newspapers give enough coverage to the issue of boko haram insurgency. That the two newspapers were lacking in their depth of coverage of boko haram insurgency in Nigeria. That they allocate

enough space for the stories relating to the insurgency. The study concludes that the two newspapers did not give high prominence to boko haram insurgency in their reportage.

As a way forward, we make the following recommendation:

- Nigerian Newspaper should improve their coverage of boko haram insurgency in Nigeria with view to addressing the issue to educate Nigerians.
- There is a need for Nigerian newspapers to give more prominence to boko haram insurgency, so as find last solutions to the menace of the insurgency.
- That Nigerian newspaper should improve their depth of coverage of boko haram insurgency by allocating more space, if possible to create special pages on crisis

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